

REMARKS

The 3 June 2004 official action addressed claims 1-6. Claims 1-6 are canceled and replaced by new claims 7-12.

1. Overview of amendmentsSpecification amendments

The specification is amended to clarify its language and to add reference numerals consistent with new Figure 4. A substitute specification and a marked-up version showing the amendments made is provided herewith in accordance with 37 CFR §125. No new matter is added.

Claim amendments

The new claims more clearly define a method in accordance with the invention. In independent claim 7, a microcomputer stores a first program for rewriting specified data stored in a flash memory and a first identification data for specifying at least a type of the flash memory. An instruction for rewriting data stored in the flash memory is received from an external circuit. A rewrite of the data stored in the flash memory is performed using the first program in response to the received instruction. The rewrite is performed by a flash writer in accordance with the first identification data, using rewrite control data stored in said flash writer. An example of this processing is provided in the application at page 8, line 16 to page 10, line 11.

Dependent claims 8-12 recite further features drawn from the same portion of the text.

No new matter is added.

Drawing amendments

Replacement figures for Figures 3 and 4 are supplied herewith.

New Figure 3 modifies original Figure 3 to provide more detail of the data stored in each element. These details are drawn from the application at page 8, line 16 to page 10, line 11.

New Figure 4 corresponds to the process defined in new claims 7-12, which is drawn from the application at page 8, line 16 to page 10, line 11. New reference numerals are used in new Figure 4 and these reference numerals are inserted into the specification to indicate where each feature of new Figure 4 is drawn from.

No new matter is added.

2. Response to objections and rejections

Drawing objections

The drawings were objected for not showing features recited in the claims. The revised drawings show features corresponding to the new claims.

Prior art rejections

Claims 1 and 4 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over applicant's description of related art (DRA) in view of JP 06-332691 (Azuma). Claim 2 was rejected as being obvious over the DRA and Azuma in view of Bass (U.S. 6,041,319).

Because new claims are presented, the new claims will be evaluated with respect to the cited art.

New independent claim 7 recites a process in which a microcomputer stores both a program for rewriting a flash memory and first identification data specifying at least the type of the flash memory. An instruction is received to rewrite the flash memory, and then a rewrite is performed by a flash writer in accordance with the first identification data using rewrite control data stored in the flash writer.

The cited art does not teach the storage of rewrite control data in a flash writer, or performing a rewrite using such rewrite control data in accordance

with first data stored in the microcomputer that indicates at least the type of the flash memory.

The DRA shows a circuit that includes a mask ROM and a flash memory, but does not include a separate nonvolatile memory for storage of version or lot information (see Figure 2). Thus the DRA does not provide a place to store the specified first identification data, and thus a flash writer cannot perform a rewrite based on such data. The DRA also does not teach a flash writer that stores rewrite control data in the flash writer.

Applicant has obtained a machine translation of Azuma from the Japanese Patent Office web site, and has submitted the translation in an IDS filed herewith. Based on this translation, applicant believes that Azuma does not teach a flash writer that stores rewrite control data in the flash writer, such that a rewrite is performed by the flash writer in accordance with the first identification data using rewrite control data stored in the flash writer.

Bass was cited for teaching the additional feature of original claim 2. Bass describes storing model numbers and version numbers of a device in a flash memory. Bass does not teach a flash writer that stores rewrite control data in the flash writer, such that a rewrite is performed by the flash writer in accordance with the first identification data using rewrite control data stored in the flash writer.

The dependent claims recite further features that are not found in the DRA, Azuma, or Bass. Accordingly all claims are believed to be distinguished from the cited art.

The foregoing amendments and remarks address all bases for objection and rejection and re believed to place the case in condition for allowance. The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 4 October 04

By Ronald Coslick

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Washington Harbour
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20007-5109
Telephone: (202) 672-5407
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Ronald Coslick
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 36,489